

A woman and a young boy are standing in a garden. The woman, on the left, is wearing a red traditional Chinese dress with a pattern of gold and silver coins. She has dark hair pulled back and is wearing glasses. The young boy, on the right, is wearing a blue traditional Chinese dress with a gold dragon and cloud pattern. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. They are standing in front of a large bush with white flowers and green leaves. The ground is covered with fallen leaves and grass.

Facets

June 2011

International connection

Families from around the globe build new relationships in Ames



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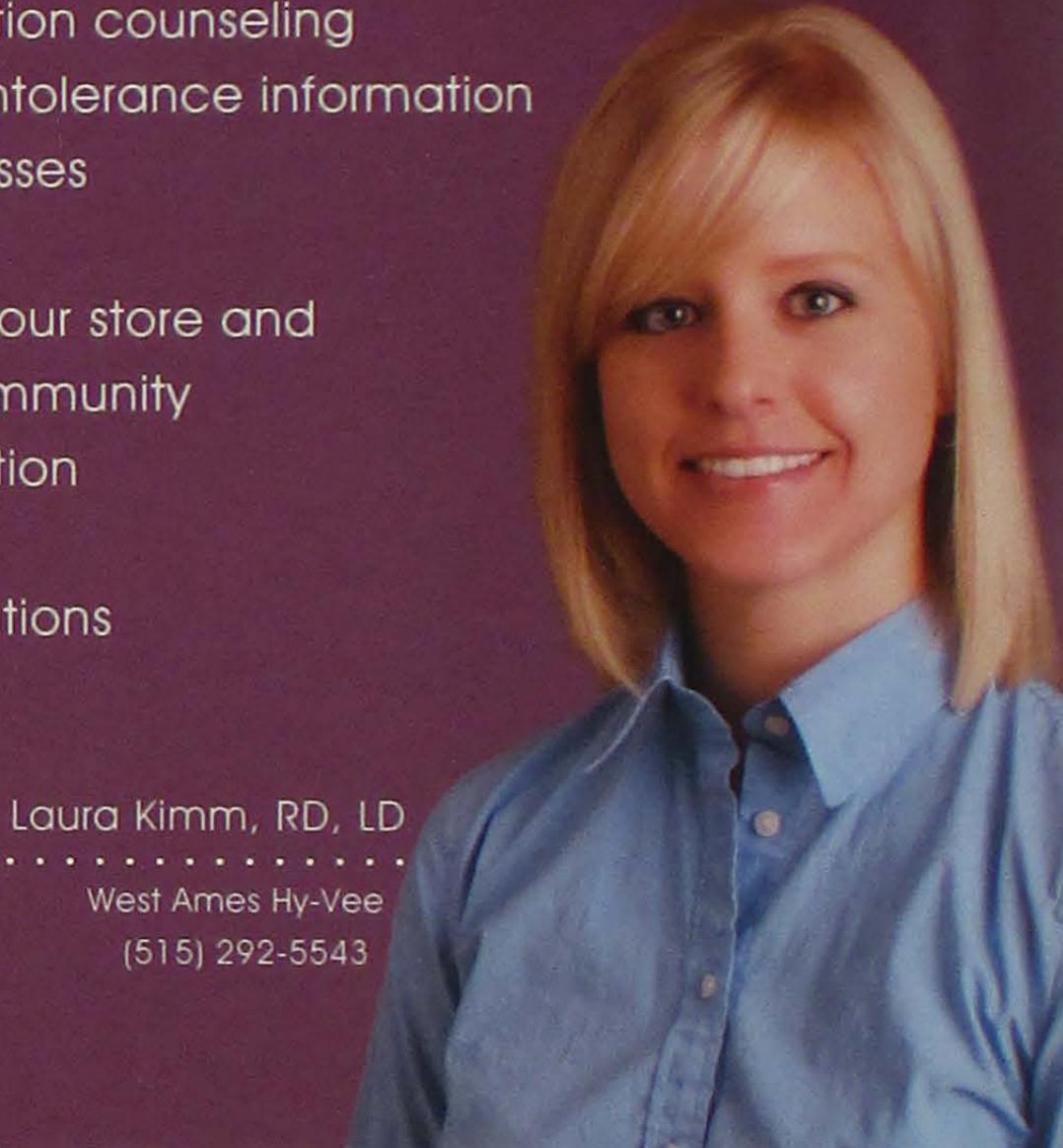
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Facet - *n.* 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.
2. The particular angle from which something is considered.

FEATURES



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International connection: Families from around the globe build new relationships in Ames.

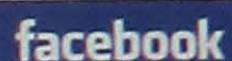
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Entertainment media distract parents, overstimulate children.



ON THE COVER

Jingtao Wang and her son, Jacob Xing. Photo by Amy Vinchattle/Facets



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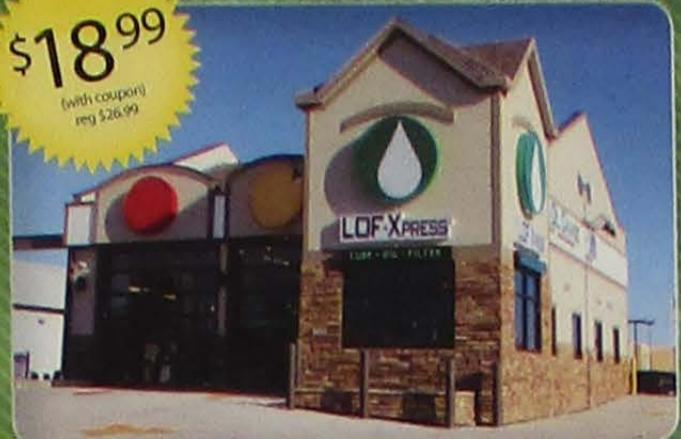
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The ties that bind

This month's edition and our theme, "Focus on the family" hits right in my wheelhouse. By the time this issue goes to print, I'll be married! At this writing, the wedding is only days away. Knee-deep in the nitty-gritty details like napkin color and who's moving the chairs, I keep coming back to the prize at the end of all this planning: the beginning of my new family with my husband-to-be.

Our wedding's celebrants, good friends of ours in the midst of parenting three kids under age 5, shared with us recently that it's the little moments that braid your lives together as a married couple and a family. Yes, the wedding is lovely and exciting. But it's the small moments that create a feeling that lingers and intertwines your spirits.

I hope you'll find just as



many things to consider in the pages of this month's magazine — something for every family, whether that includes children, husbands, grandparents or

friends that comprise your family circle.

Drawing on that, we want to hear more of your wisdom. So I have an assignment for you, readers. Each month, we're going to ask you a question. About your lives, about what you've learned and how to live. Send your responses to FacetsReaderMail@gmail.com, and we'll publish your responses in our next issue.

To start, e-mail us your responses to this question: What was your best summer getaway?

We can't wait to hear what you have to say.

To families — of any sort,

Lisa

"If you look deeply into the palm of your hand, you will see your parents and all generations of your ancestors. All of them are alive in this moment. Each is present in your body. You are the continuation of each of these people."

— Thich Nhat Hanh

what we're into | JUNE



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— Peggy Best

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— Lisa Munger



INVITING THE NEIGHBORS OVER FOR A BARBECUE

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— Lisa Munger

CUPCAKE EMPORIUM

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— Peggy Best

VESUVIUS PIZZA

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— Peggy Best

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— Debra Atkinson



OUTDOOR CONCERTS

With Memorial Day in the rearview, the summer concert season will kick into high gear.

— Lisa Munger

International connection



Photos by Amy Vinchattle/Facets

ABOVE: Meher Vani Bojja is the global outreach coordinator with the Ames YWCA.

AT RIGHT: Friends Meher Vani Bojja, left, and Jingtao Wang agree that while being a family temporarily located in a new country can be challenging at times, getting involved and meeting women in similar situations has made the transition easier.

Families from around the globe build new relationships in Ames

BY ALLISON SUESSE

In the summer of 2006, Meher Vani Bojja, 33, left her home in India, traveled thousands of miles and arrived in Ames. Bojja's husband had been in Iowa since 2002 at Iowa State University's Research Farm. Bojja said she was pleased she could temporarily relocate to a town like Ames, and thought settling here was better than going to any other city in the United States. Ames has proved a comfortable place for Bojja, who was leaving her friends, familiar culture and large extended family.

Being immersed in a different culture was not too difficult for Bojja, who began volunteering right away; it was being away from her family that proved to be the most challenging.

Bojja came from a family of 10. In India, many families live in a joint-family structure, including Bojja, who was used to being surrounded by relatives. In moving to Ames, she had to adjust to the quiet of living with her husband and 2-year-old son. During this adjustment, she found out what real silence sounded like.

Instead of feeling alienated and alone, Bojja sought the company of other international spouses at ISU. In the absence of her friends and family in India, Bojja began to make new relationships, which blossomed into close friendships. The friends Bojja and her husband have made in Iowa have become like a second family, she said.

"When you come to a different country, you have to make everything. So when you create something, it becomes more dear to you," Bojja said of the friendships she's created in Ames.

Continued on page 9

"When you come to a different country, you have to make everything. So when you create something, it becomes more dear to you." — Meher Vani Bojja



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Since 2006, Bojja has worked with YWCA, and eventually became the organization's global outreach coordinator. One YWCA program, Engaging International Spouses, is an organization that was established to support international spouses while they integrate into the Ames community. Coming to live in the U.S. from another country poses a number of challenges for families. Certain aspects of everyday life that come naturally to Americans, like driving and preparing food, require tutorials for international families. Engaging International Spouses helps these families answer questions about their new lives in Ames.

Bojja met one of her close friends Srivalli Shiralkar, 28, through YWCA. Shiralkar is also from India and is temporarily living in Ames. Leaving India was difficult for Shiralkar, who relies on Skype and Vonage to keep in touch with family overseas. Getting involved with organizations and volunteering helped relieve some of the discomfort that resulted in moving away from home.

After about six months in Ames, Shiralkar said, she began feeling more comfortable, while still holding on to some of the traditions she practiced in India.

"I miss India too much because of the

family and the festivals over there," Shiralkar said.

Shiralkar practiced Agnihotra, a process that purifies the atmosphere by burning rice and ghee, a clarified butter. Being able to practice this ritual in Iowa posed a bit of a challenge initially. Shiralkar noticed that in the U.S., the space she practiced the ritual in was less open than in India. The burning would set the fire alarms off, making it difficult to practice, but holding onto religious rituals was important to Shiralkar.

For Jingtao Wang, 37, a graduate student studying interdisciplinary studies, relocating her family from China to the United States came with unprecedented challenges. Wang is a friend of Bojja and Shiralkar. Wang's family was living in New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina hit, destroying her home and belongings. Wang and her son had to move to Chicago because, as Wang said: "Our apartment was floating. We had nothing left."

To add to the challenge of being subjected to a natural disaster, Wang said that during this time she was not able to practice her English skills, since connecting with her family in Chinese took precedence over meeting new people in the U.S. After the hurricane, her family was forced to split up, since at the time, she had a young child. Wang and her 1-year-

old son moved to Chicago, while her husband stayed in New Orleans. They were able to reunite again as a family in Ames.

"My husband and I always appreciate the hurricane," Wang said of the natural disaster that served to bring her family together.

Despite losing everything, Wang and her family viewed it as a positive experience, because the hurricane presented them an opportunity to get to know more of the U.S. and eventually led them to Ames, where she met close friends. Since moving to Ames, she has begun volunteering and becoming involved in the community.

Wang, Bojja and Shiralkar agree that while being a family temporarily located in a new country can be challenging at times, becoming involved and meeting women in similar situations has made the transition easier. When they're involved in a community of their own, Bojja, Wang and Shiralkar said they're happier and feel comfortable living in Ames.

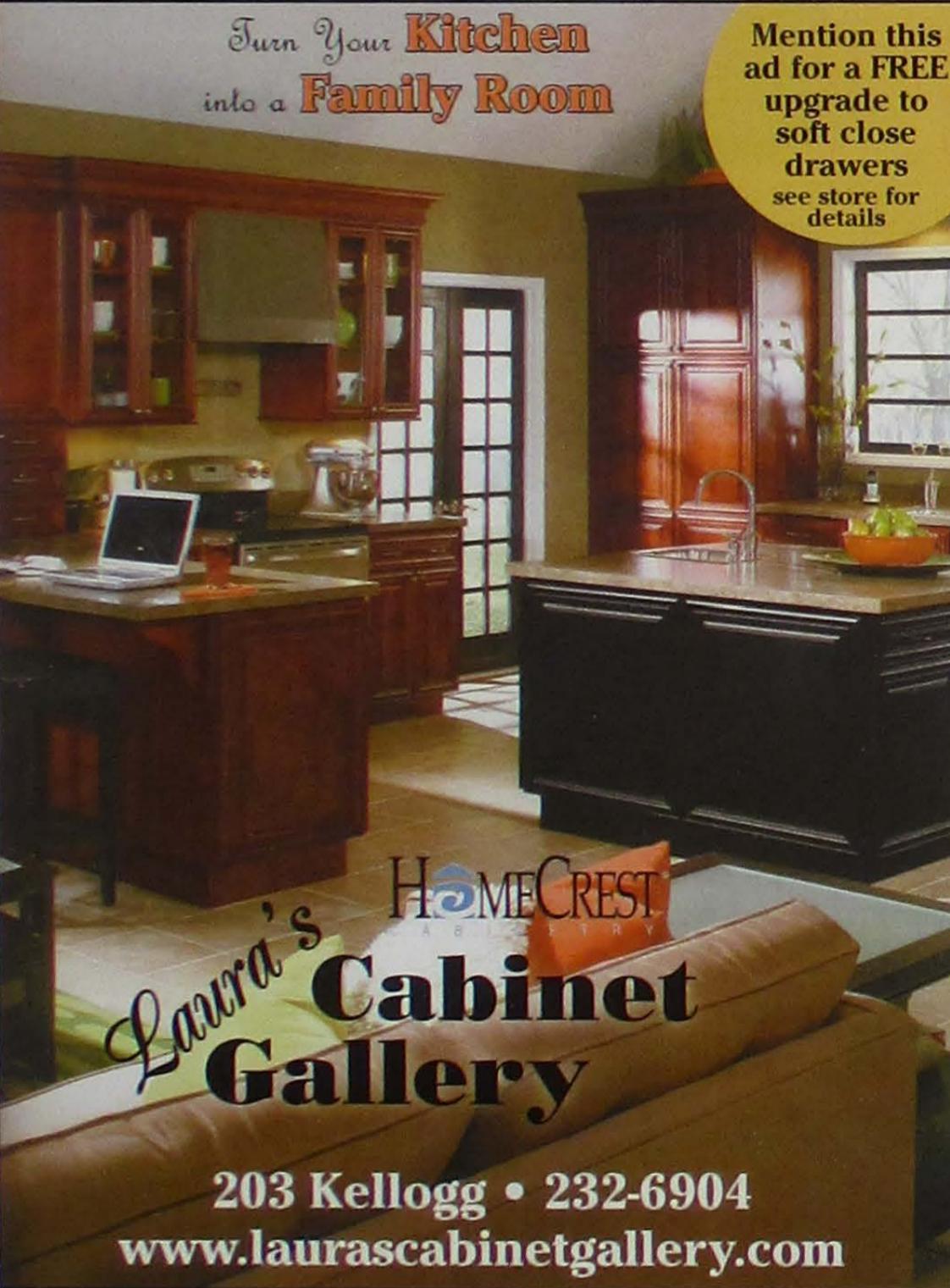
"If you are happy, then our husbands can focus on their work. And our kids will be happy, too, if mom's happy," Wang said.

Bojja said she feels like a global citizen.

Reach Allison Suesse via email at allison.suesse@gmail.com.

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Media overload



By Jupiterimages

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends zero television time for children 2 years old and younger, a maximum of 1 hour per day for children ages 2 to 5, and 2 hours for children older than 5.

Entertainment media distract parents, overstimulate children

BY PEGGY BEST

Entertainment media seem to be taking over the lives of young families. Televisions, computers and video games have been around a long time, but new gadgets, like iPods, iPads, iPhones and DVD players in cars and more have exploded onto the scene.

Parents can be emotionally absent when dividing their time between these media and their children. This devalues the personal relational time with them, said one Ames therapist. Parents send the message to their kids that spending time alone with them isn't valuable, said Nancy Stubbs, a therapist with Firm Foundations Counseling in Ames. Eye contact with children is generally made when parents are angry with their children. This in turn links eye contact with shame.

"You have to make sure to make eye contact with your kids when laughing and playing. This won't happen if you are distracted, no matter what the other task is that divides your time," Stubbs said.

Television and other screen time for children causes many problems. By age 3, 80 percent of a child's brain has developed, Stubbs explained. Even though some TV shows are considered kid-appropriate, they still have a lot of quick movements, flashing and changing of lights, which is unhealthy for children.

"Flickering [on the screen] changes brain activity, and too

many stimuli can be harmful and can play a big role in causing attention deficit disorder," she said. "Even if your small children don't watch a lot of television, what they should be watching is the old shows, like 'Mr. Rogers' or 'Blue's Clues.'" These types of shows don't have all the added stimuli that can be harmful.

Screen time can also cause delays in language development, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children learn language by speaking and being spoken to, which doesn't happen when watching television. The group recommends zero television time for children 2 years old and younger, a maximum of 1 hour per day for children ages 2 to 5, and 2 hours for children older than 5.

Jack Swanson, a pediatric physician at McFarland Clinic in Ames, cited a study where preschool-age children were observed during play time. As soon as a television in the room was turned on to the news, even though the children had no interest in watching what was on the television, their on-task behavior decreased dramatically.

"Television takes a child's mind off what they are doing, even when they aren't really paying attention to it," he said.

What's more, he said violent behaviors watched on television, in movies and video games can cause violent and aggressive behavior in children.

"The biggest change I've seen in my 35-year career in children is

an increase in obesity and ADD," Swanson said.

He said in today's average household, children spend an average of 7 hours per day watching television or engaging in other forms of screen time. Seventy percent of teens have their own television, 50 percent have a video game console, and 33 percent have a computer with an Internet connection in their bedroom.

"There is no question these dynamics have changed the interactions between parents and children to a large extent with the time spent on these types of media," Swanson said.

Nancy Stubbs said research shows overstimulation from electronic devices causes young children to not want to sit in their parent's lap to read a book. Be intentional about your family time. Don't allow electronics to be a disruption.

"This hits on so many important things that a child needs: They are missing touch, warmth and their parents' voices," Stubbs said. "Reading a book with a child creates a real connection that says 'I'm here for you!'"

Reach Peggy Best via email at pegathome554@msn.com.

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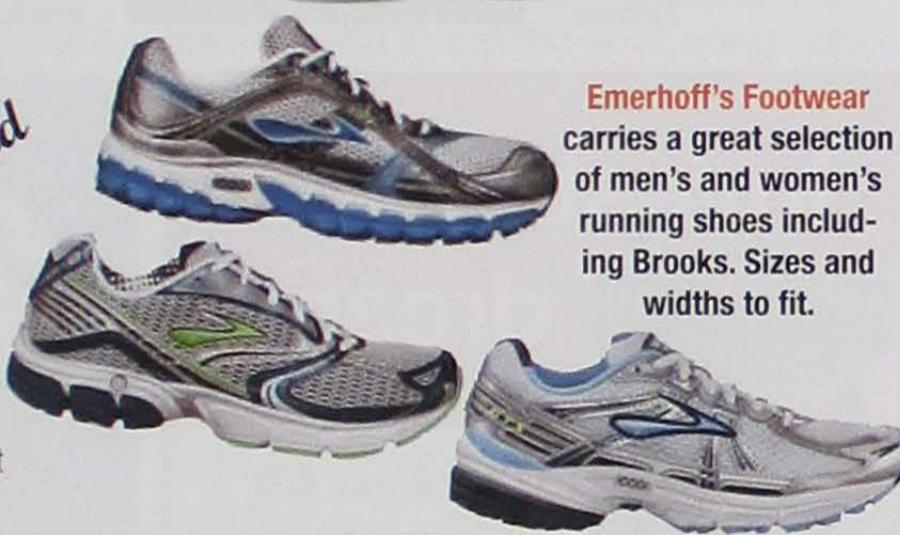
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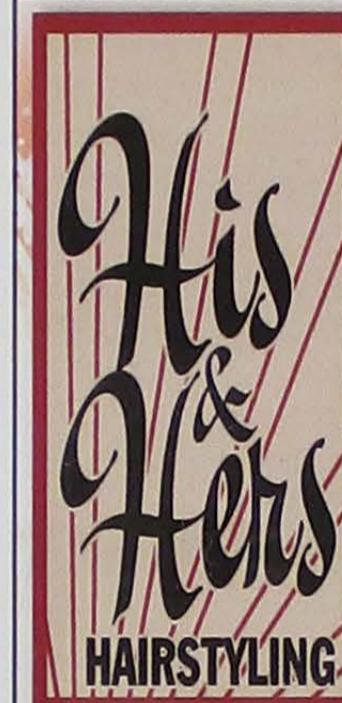
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A fresher, younger look

THE CUT

Stylist Joshua Duchene gave Renee Montgomery a more modern style, pulling her out of a bygone hair decade. The style she had was a shorter-in-the-front, longer-in-the-back look. She didn't want a drastic change, so they decided a longer bob would give her a more up-to-date look. Joshua cut a few more layers to make her look more modern. The updated look was finished with side-swept bangs.

THE COLOR

Renee had light blonde hair that caused her to look older than she is. Joshua infused Renee's hair with color that gave her hair depth and updated her color to a more modern style. Joshua gave Renee lighter blonde pieces, and a few choco-

late lowlights distinguished facial features and brought out her eyes.

THE MAKEUP

Makeup artist Gregory Link enhanced Renee's natural skin tone and color. Renee usually went with natural-looking makeup and needed something to fit in with her everyday routine. Gregory used a foundation primer, which has a purple tint that gives skin radiance and luminosity. This makes the skin appear younger, because younger skin has a high cell turnover. He incorporated spring colors, such as a light pink blush, into the rest of her makeup, giving her a fresher, younger look.

—Paige Godden,
Facets

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Rockabilly styles

Q I really need to know how to do some rockabilly styles, and my hair also need a new cut to go with it ...

A As a bit of general information for those readers who may not know what a "rockabilly" style is, the term "rockabilly" refers to the styles made popular in the late 1930s, the 1940s and early 1950s, the era in which rock 'n' roll was formed. Rockabilly has become something of a subculture movement as individuals who favor the styles and music of the era (as well as the classic cars of the period) identify with one another and host social events centered around the things they love: old style rock 'n' roll, classic car shows and more.

For men, rockabilly hairstyles commonly involve a cut with short sides and slightly longer back with sufficient length on top and in front to create the up swept "pompadour." Another men's rockabilly hairstyle is the flat-top; this is the original, with the top of the head cut to approximately one inch and styled with pomade or wax to give an even plane or spiking ends.

Women's rockabilly styles are more varied, but still follow two general looks. The first is a moderate-length, layered style. The hair is kept longer at the top of the head (generally 5-6 inches), shorter at the sides (generally 3-4 inches), mid-length at the crown area (4-5 inches), with the longest section being found usually at the nape area. This style is always curly, making use of the hair's natural curl or being permed and roller set to give straighter hair curls and body. It is a classic look from the 1940s and early 1950s. The hair is styled with volume at the top of the head, close to the sides and cascading in waves and curls along the crown and down the neck.

The other look that is most common among the Rockabilly devotees is the one made popular by Bettie Page, the 1940s and 1950s pin-up model. This look is a longer style, generally created with blunt cut fringe across the forehead (usually being cut to mid-forehead length). The hair is center-parted and left long in a blunt cut style (or with a few layers at the ends of the hair). The

hair is generally styled to have soft waves along the length, while the bangs are straight and smooth.

These two basic hairstyles form the bases from which all of the other variant rockabilly styles emerge. The lengths can be widely varied according to your taste and what suits you best and can be easily updated, in case you want to be able to create separate looks for different occasions and circumstances. You'll need to talk with your stylist about facial shape, build and facial structure to find a style that works for you. However, I hope the above information will give you a place to start.

Q Can bleaching and dying your hair cause brain damage?

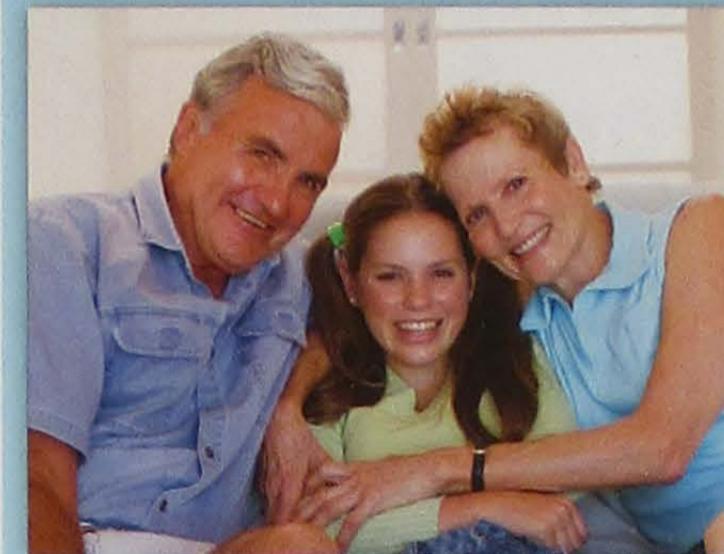
A There has been no evidence to support any claims that the proper use of hair dyes and bleaching products cause brain damage of any sort. However, the chemicals in hair color and bleaches are toxic, and if ingested or otherwise introduced into the body, can cause brain damage and neurological damage. Therefore, it is extremely important to follow the directions on your hair color products carefully, and keep any hair color products out of the reach of children.

All of the studies of hair color products over the years have shown these products to be either safe, or to have inconclusive results concerning health risks. One prominent among these was a study which claimed a link between the use of permanent brown hair color and cancer. However, a study by Oxford University refuted these findings and pointed out that the initial study group was only 13 people and therefore the estimate was imprecise and results were likely to be chance findings.

According to current studies and findings, the use of hair color isn't in any sense a health risk, though there are individual reactions to hair color products which should be handled on a case-by-case basis. If you have any kind of reaction to a hair color product, you should consult your physician immediately.

Joshua Duchene is the artistic director at The Salon in Ames. He graduated from La James Cosmetology School in Des Moines. Reach him via email at jduchene@thesaloninames.com.

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summertime snacks

Now that school-age kids are home for the summer, parents will hear throughout the day, "What's to eat?" It can be a challenge to stock the fridge and cupboards with summertime snacks that are healthy, while still keeping the kids satisfied and staying in line with the family budget.

To assure your kids are getting a nutritious, healthy snack, stock the refrigerator and cupboard with finger foods that are easy to grab and go. Designate a "snack shelf" in the cupboard and fridge for only those snacks.

Kids will be more likely to eat fresh fruits and vegetables if they are washed and packaged in snack-size plastic bags. Make dairy one of the snack choices, as most American kids fall short of getting the calcium they need. Have low-fat milk available in single-serve containers to make it a convenient choice.

**LAURA KIMM**

LISTED BELOW ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS TO STOCK YOUR "SNACK SHELF" WITH GRAB-N-GO SNACKS THIS SUMMER:

Refrigerator/freezer:

- String cheese, cheese cubes
- Light yogurt
- Lean deli meat
- Chocolate, skim and 1% milk in single-serve containers
- Baby carrots or carrot chips in snack-size packages
- Grape tomatoes
- Plums, nectarines, grapes, apples
- Frozen juice bars

Cupboard:

- Whole grain crackers: Kashi, Triscuits
- Pretzels
- Soy Crisps, a potato chip alternative
- Peanuts or soy nuts
- Skippy Peanut Butter Squeeze Sticks
- Del Monte Fruit Cups or Fruit to Go (packed in water or natural fruit juice)
- Orville Redenbacher's Mini Bags microwave popcorn
- Granola and cereal bars
- Pudding cups
- Bananas
- Trail mix with nuts and dried fruit
- Dried fruit (cranberries, cherries, apricots)

Summertime snacks don't have to break the bank. The trick is to plan snacks ahead of time to take advantage of ad specials, coupons and seasonal items that all help to stretch your food dollar. Another way to save money is to choose store brands of your child's favorite snack foods. Private-label store brands save an average of 15 percent to 25 percent, with quality and nutrition comparable to the national brand.

Seasonal produce during the summer months is a bargain. Summer provides an abundance of seasonal fruits and vegetables, making it affordable to stock up on healthy snacks kids will enjoy.

Look for foods you frequently consume, and purchase them in bulk quantities. Portion into single-serve containers or resealable bags to save money.

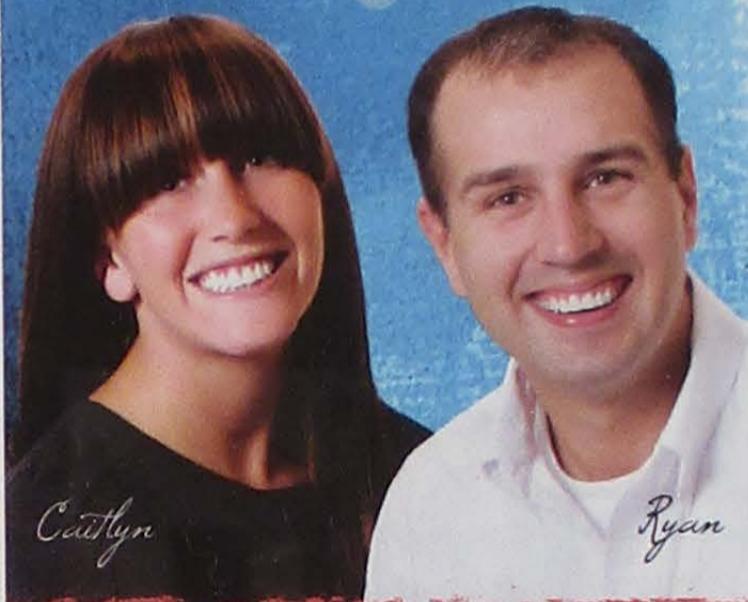
Laura Kimm holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa in health and sports studies. She is a member of the American Dietetic Association and the Iowa Dietetic Association. She works as a registered dietitian at the West Ames Hy-Vee. Reach her via email at lkimm@hy-vee.com.



TRY THESE BUDGET-FRIENDLY KIDS' SNACKS:

- Frozen grapes — place washed grapes on tray and put in freezer. Serve frozen.
- Frozen fruit pops using bananas, berries, peaches or watermelon
- Ice cream cones filled with yogurt and chopped fresh fruit
- Peanut butter spread on celery, apples or graham crackers
- String cheese with whole grain crackers
- Deli meat, cheese and lettuce rolled in tortilla shell
- Fruit smoothie — fresh or frozen fruit, yogurt, juice and ice
- Trail mix — cereal, dried fruit, nuts and chocolate chips

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Financial planning is not just for the wealthy

Some people say financial planning is for the wealthy; I say financial planning is for everyone.

No matter where you are in life, financial planning can help you avoid some mistakes and create financial success. Here are five ideas to get you started.



KAREN PETERSEN

1. CREATE YOUR SPENDING PLAN

How much do you earn? What is the amount of your paycheck or direct deposit? This is the amount you can spend.

What are your expenses? Record your expenses. Just the facts — don't judge your spending habits as you record.

Compare income and expenses; you want to spend less than you earn. It is possible to spend more than you earn. The problem is that you are really spending money day to day that you will have to earn in the future. If you find your expenses are more than your income, now is the time to judge your spending habits. Determine the expenses you will limit or eliminate.

As long as you are paring expenses, find another \$25 a month and have it direct deposited to your savings account.

It is amazing how powerful you will feel when you know you are spending within your plan and your savings is beginning to grow.

2. CULTIVATE SELF-DISCIPLINE

This means learning to say no to your wants. It is so easy for that voice in our heads to get into the conversation about buying what we want. The voice in your head might say, "You work hard and you deserve it." The financially-responsible you might respond, "I can't afford it." And that voice in your head will assure you that you do deserve it, whatever it is.

Cue yourself in to respond, "I **could** buy that, but I would rather see my savings grow."

3. DEFINE YOUR GOALS

This step is imperative. There is no reason to follow your spending plan or practice self discipline if you have no goals. Set smart goals:

Specific — Clearly define your goal.

Measurable — How will you know you achieve this goal?

Achievable — Can you reasonably complete this goal?

Relevant — Does it have meaning to you?

Time-bound — Define the end date.

Write your action plan; break your action plan into five to eight date specific steps.

4. SELF-MOTIVATION

What motivates you? This is a hard exercise for many of us. Here are some ideas to help you identify your motivators and methods to keep motivated.

- Create a self-motivation group.
- Share your goals and compare success methods.
- Reward yourself each time you complete a part of your action plan.
- Create a graph to chart your progress.
- Post pictures that remind you of your goal.

5. YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS ALONE

If this seems like a good idea, but is a bit overwhelming, look for help. You could get information from: the internet, blogs, friends, co-workers, family and financial publications. All of these sources are easy and cheap to access. The information may not always fit your situation; review carefully to find what is true and relevant for you.

Value yourself and your goals enough to seek professional help, contact a certified financial planner.

If you are considering a financial advisor here are questions to ask:

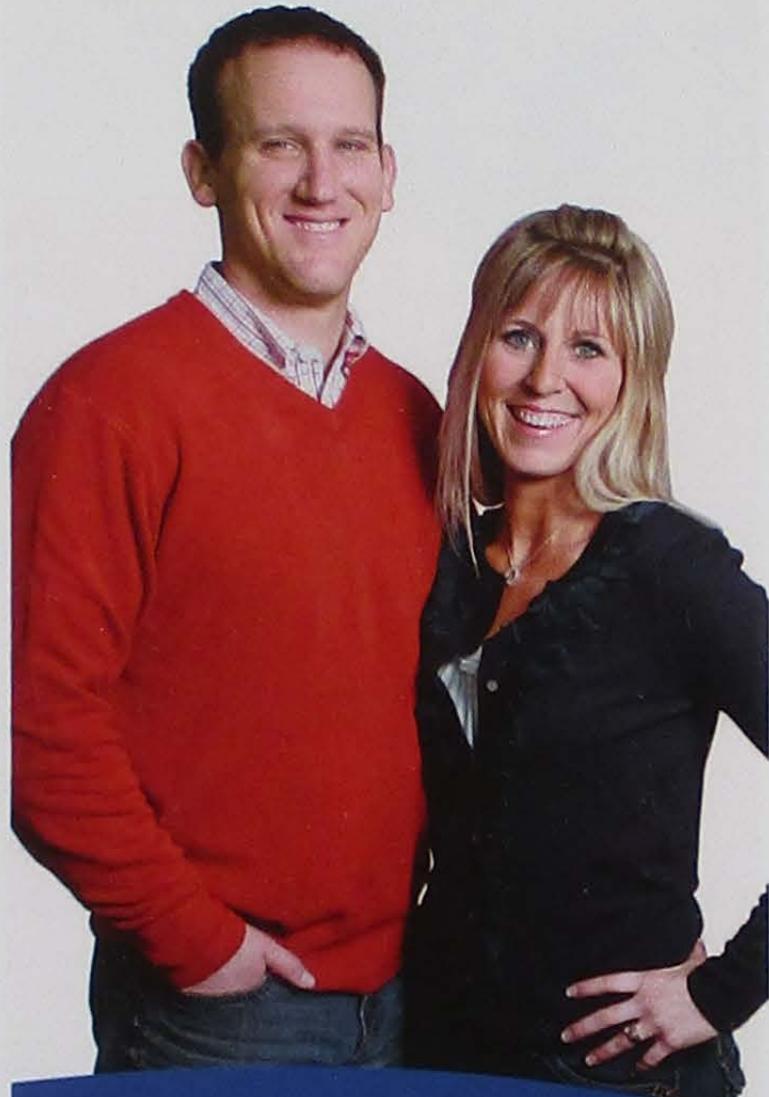
- Is there a cost for the initial appointment?
- What are the advisor's certifications?
- Do an online search of certifications and criteria.
- How does the advisor charge?

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Karen L Petersen CFP® CDFA™ is a fee-based financial advisor. She graduated from Iowa State University in family resource management. You can contact her at (515) 232-2785 or karen@mymorethanmoney.net.

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Saturday, June 11, 2011

Ames Middle School, 3915 Mortensen Road, Ames, Iowa

**8 a.m. - 10K and 5K races
and 1-mile non-competitive**

9:15 a.m. - Awards

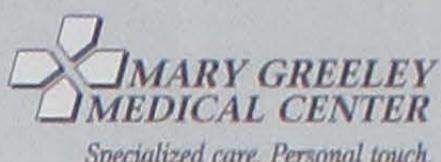
Medals to top 3 finishers in 19 categories.
Participation ribbons to all youth 12 and under

9:45 a.m. - Hope Run Jr.

Ages 6 and under—50m
Ages 7-8—100m
Ages 9-10—200m

Registration information:

- \$25 for adults (\$30 on race day)
- \$10 for youth (ages 12 and under)
- All proceeds benefit the Israel Family Hospice House
- Free post-race refreshments for participants!



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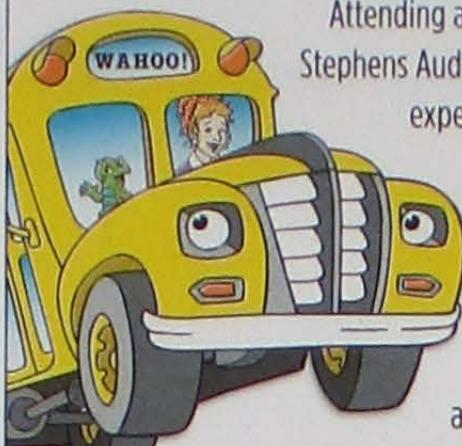
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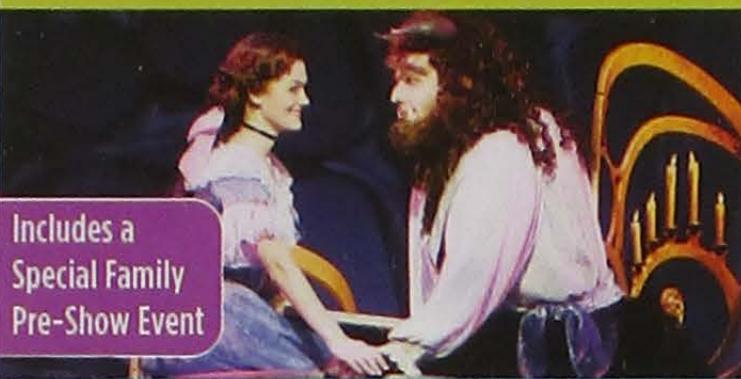
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Putting a stop to childhood obesity starts at home

Results from a recent National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, using measured heights and weights, indicated an estimated 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2-19 are obese.

Jill Alexander, a pediatrician at Ames' McFarland Clinic, confirmed she sees about that same percentage of overweight children in her practice.

"Our kids are more sedentary than they have ever been, and they eat more than they have ever eaten," Alexander said.

The cause for the increase in childhood obesity in recent decades is attributed to the trilogy of genetics, behavioral factors and environment factors, she said. Given that there's been no increase in the contribution of genetic factors in the last three decades, yet prevalence of obesity has tripled among school-aged children during the same time, behavioral and environmental factors are understandably under the microscope.

Recognizing there is a problem is the first step. According to Alexander, studies show many parents of overweight kids don't recognize that their child is overweight.

The next step is to avoid blame. However you got here, parents' focus should be on helping the child know she can take control of her health, and that will make a difference in her life.

Then focus on the family changing lifestyle habits.

"Discuss with your child that the whole family is going to work on a healthier lifestyle," Alexander said.

She recommends starting small, such as an evening walk around the block together or a bike ride at Ada Hayden Park in Ames. Alexander has witnessed positive changes in her pediatric patients when the whole family approach to lifestyle change was taken.

Improving the environment includes both eliminating sedentary time while promot-

ing physical activity and choosing healthy snacks. If the Oreos are in the cupboard, you're going to eat them. If a hungry child comes home to ready-to-eat fruit instead, she'll eat that! Even small things, like helping around the house if outside activities aren't appropriate, can add up to a higher energy expenditure. Could kids earn a little for their chores and be helping you at the same time?

Last year, when the Ames School Board was voting on the new schedule with the plan to cut physical education class time, Alexander spoke up against this change. The "Healthy People 2010" report recommends increasing the amount of physical education time for all students. Children spend a great deal of their waking hours at school.



DEBRA ATKINSON

STATISTICS TO CONSIDER

- 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2-19 are obese.
- 80 percent of children who are overweight at 10-15 years old will be obese adults at age 25.
- If a child is overweight before 8 years of age, obesity in adulthood is likely to be more severe.

"While increasing physical education time alone won't stop the epidemic, we need to get kids moving more," Alexander said.

Talk to your child care provider about helping you reinforce good choices and a healthy lifestyle. These environments, and the adult role models in them, along with your home and the community overall are extremely important in developing good habits.

"It is far easier to make lifestyle changes at 6, 10 and 15, than it is at 30 and 40," says Alexander.

Kris Tibben, a 13-year teaching veteran at Sawyer Elementary in Ames, said she doesn't necessarily see a greater number of overweight students, but notices there are more extreme examples of weight challenges. The effects on self-esteem are evident in



Digital Vision

Take a family approach to adopting healthy lifestyle habits to make a difference in your child's life.

the classroom and on the playground, she said.

"They usually tend to isolate themselves from physical activities," she said.

As they become more self-conscious, they become even more inactive and begin a vicious cycle.

Helping all children experience success with physical activity regardless of their weight increases the chance they'll be active adults.

Jennifer Smith, Coordinator for both Iowa State University Swim & Gym and ISU Summer Youth programs, said her programs encourage participants to be vocal with instructors if a skill or activity makes them uncomfortable. They are willing to modify activities to make them appropriate for overweight children so they have success during a session.

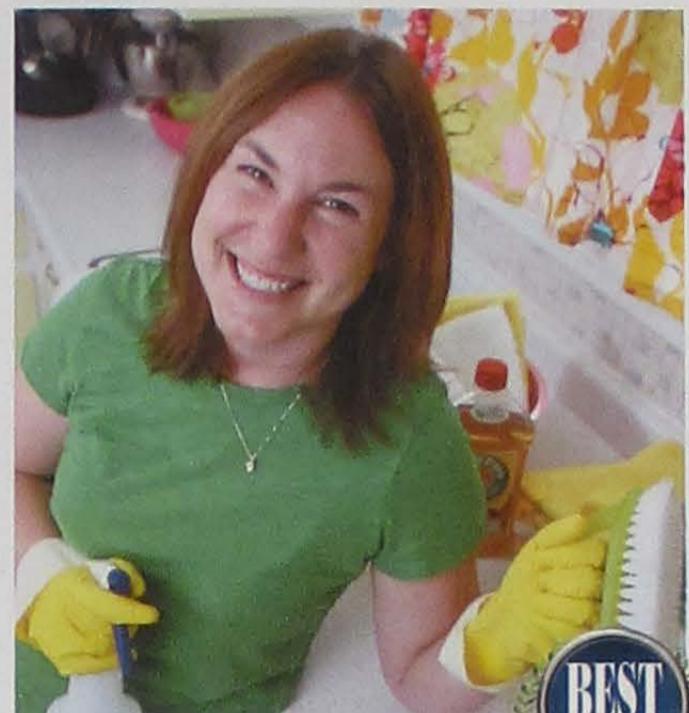
"We help the students create their own goals for self-improvement and think of those improvements as successes rather than who wins the game during lessons," Smith said of the programs' philosophy.

"Our kids are more sedentary than they have ever been, and they eat more than they have ever eaten."

— Jill Alexander

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faceted woman | AMIE ROCKOW-NELSON

Name: Amie Rockow-Nelson
Position: Dentist, Ames Center for Cosmetic and Family Dentistry
Family: hubby, Jeff Nelson; daughter, Riley; son, Gabriel
Age: 40 and fabulous. Ha ha!

What makes you laugh?

I just love watching my kids grow up. They are a joy. Last week, my daughter had her first elementary choir concert where she sang and performed the actions with zest. This weekend, my 4-year-old son rounded home plate and ran back to first during his tee-ball game.

What have you accomplished that has made you proud?

I am so proud that I have created a dental practice that patients look forward to visiting. I did not realize until my third year of dental school just how many people dread going to the dentist. Our practice recognizes this and offers a variety of amenities and a friendly atmosphere to help patients find it more enjoyable.

Best tip to look and feel great:

Take great care of your teeth. A healthy smile is such an important asset.

My simplest pleasure:

Spending time with my family. Life is so busy running from one activity to another. I love when we can cozy up with each other and enjoy popcorn and a movie.

I am thankful for:

Supportive and loving family and friends and a career I enjoy.

How do you give back to your community?

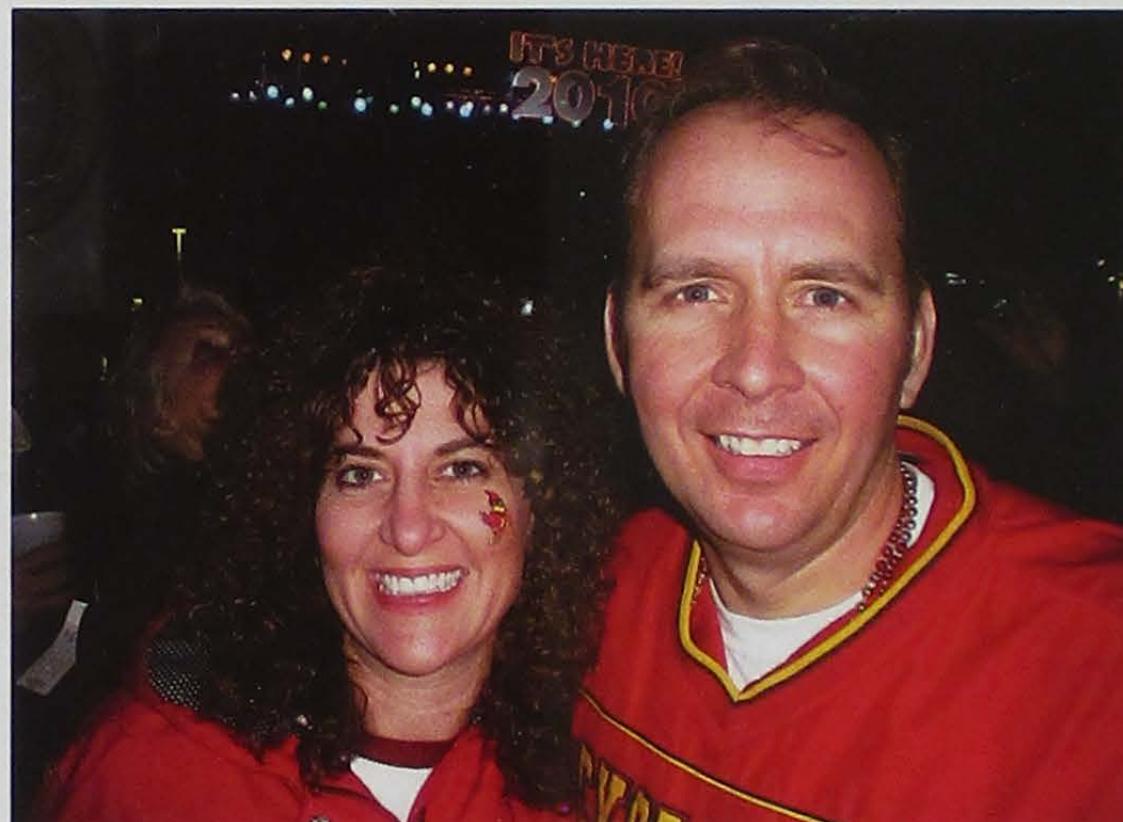
One reason I became a dentist was to help others. I try to do that in all aspects of my life. I am cur-



Photos courtesy of Amie Rockow-Nelson

Above: Amie Rockow-Nelson at her 40th birthday party.

Below: Amie Rockow-Nelson and her husband, Jeff Nelson, at an Iowa State University bowl game.



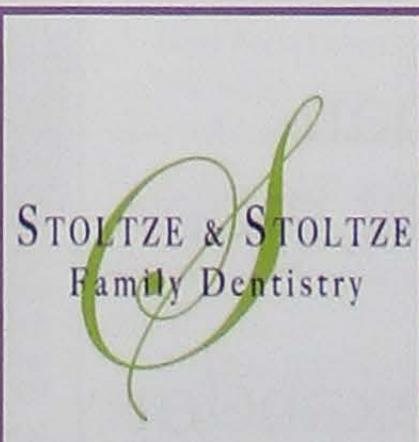
health whenever I have the opportunity.

What is your favorite thing about Ames?

Because I grew up in a small town north of Ames, I have always considered it to be my hometown. I enjoy the big-city events, but also the small-town atmosphere. Anything related to the Iowa State Cyclones is for me!

What are you watching?

I love to watch "American Idol." It might be because I can't sing a note. When I was in college, I was chosen to sing with the Temptations. My name was pulled out of a hat while I was working my summer job at the Iowa Cubs skyboxes. After I finished my part, the lead singer said into the microphone, "Well, she tried real hard!"



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No matter what your situation is The Ames Contracting Team can help...

Val Donnell and her husband Don love their charming Ames home; however, the main bathroom in this quaint abode was another story.

"Our old bathroom was dreadful," said Val Donnell. "There was only so much we could do to improve it without gutting the entire thing, so that's what we ended up doing."

With plenty of work to be done, Donnell decided to call in some contractors to take on this hefty project.

"I remember being extremely impressed with Oren from The Ames Contracting Team when I was having siding put on my house a while back," said Donnell. "So I thought I would give the team a call to come and help me tackle this project."

The Ames Contracting Team immediately began asking questions and listening to exactly what Donnell wanted done.

"The communication lines between my family and The Ames Contracting Team were always open and I constantly felt in the loop," said Donnell. "Their team helped me ask the right questions in order to identify what needed to be done."

One of the biggest concerns in the bathroom was a large closet space and an old bath and shower combination that had seen better days. For Donnell, the large closet was taking up too much valuable space and she knew there had to be a better alternative.

Donnell had the general design in mind for the bathroom, so she traveled with the Ames Contract-

ing Team to several businesses in order to be a part of the brainstorming session for the best possible layout for the space.

"When I say we gutted the bathroom, I mean we really gutted it," said Donnell. "We stripped it down to the plywood and started fresh. It was a huge project."

The Donnell's had Ames Contracting Team install a new Jacuzzi tub, separate shower and put in classic ceramic wall, floor and mosaic bath tiles. They also installed two new "his and her" sinks and all new lighting – complete with flush lighting over the tub and shower.

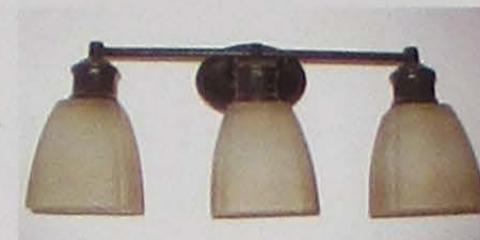
Additionally, their team custom-built all new cabinetry to make the most of the space and added in a few extra outlets for easy access.

On the bright side, they got to keep the toilet and original ceiling fan.

"We waited a few years before starting this major remodel because we wanted to make sure we knew exactly what we wanted," said Donnell. "After several weeks of construction, our remodel turned out even better than we pictured it!"

The Donnell's new bathroom now has a timeless look, a far cry from the falling-apart space they were enduring.

"I can't express how grateful I am to have worked with such a wonderful team," said Donnell. "The Ames Contracting Team truly held up their impressive reputation of being the most professional, high-quality home-improvement specialists."



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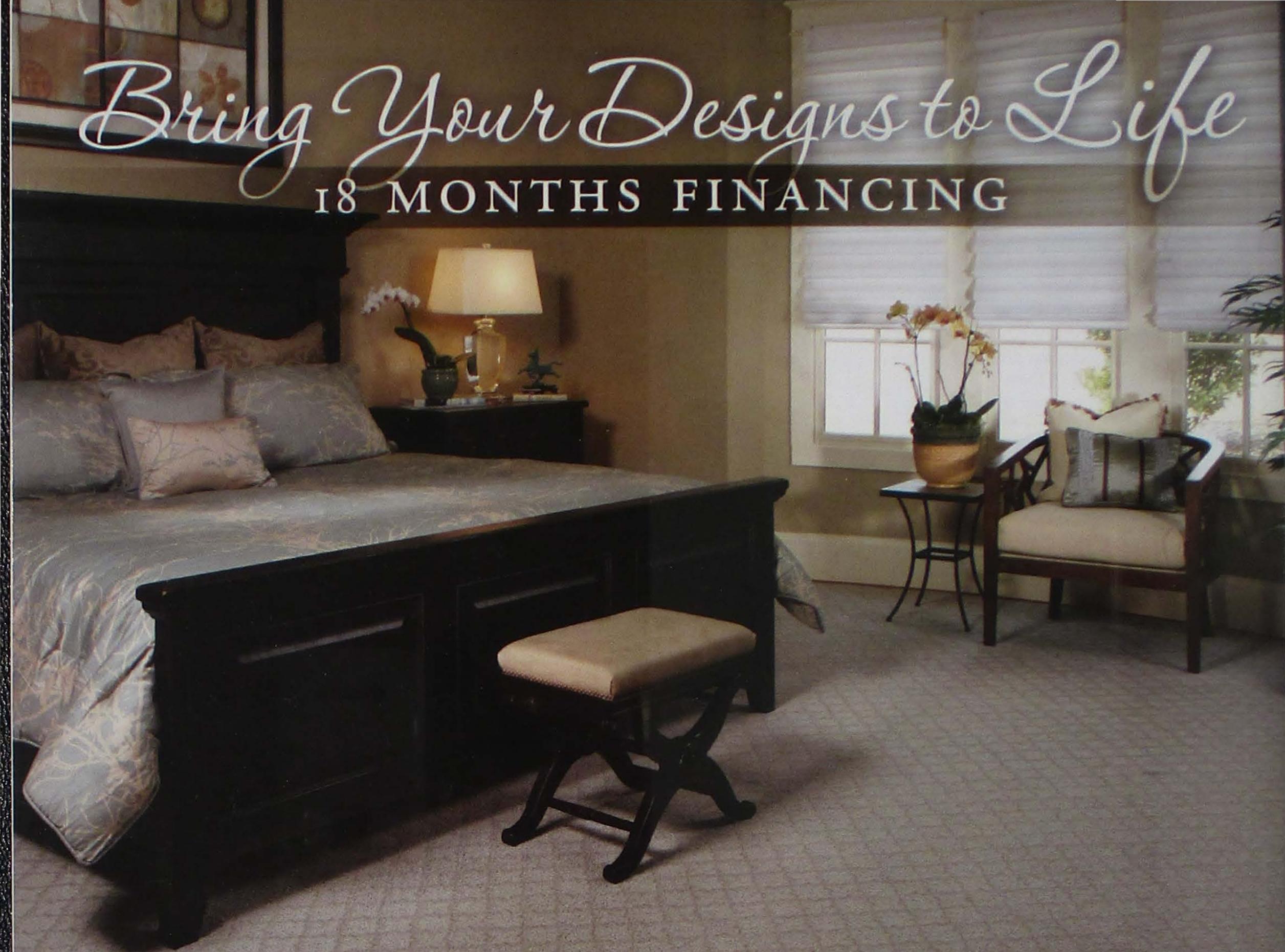
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